Catalogue of American Amphibians and Reptiles.

Wilson, Larry David. 1987. *Geagras, G. redimitus.*

Geagras Cope

Geagras Cope, 1876:141. Type species, *Geagras redimitus* Cope, 1876, by monotypy.

Sphenocalamus Fischer, 1883:5. Type-species, *Sphenocalamus lineolatus* Fischer, 1883, by monotypy.

• **Content**. A single species, *Geagras redimitus*, is recognized.

• **Definition**. A colubrid genus characterized by: slender body with head not noticeably distinct from body; head cuneiform, head scutellation accordingly modified and simplified, consisting of a cuneiform rostral, two internasals and prefrontals, a broad scutiform frontal, two parietals, divided nasal, no loreal, single tiny preocular widely separated from postnasal, single postocular, temporals 1+1; five supralabials, with the third entering the orbit; infralabials 6, with four touching anterior chin shields and fourth the largest; dorsal scales smooth, in 15 rows throughout; ventrals 113-124; anal plate divided; subcaudals 26-33, paired; maximum known total length 235 mm; maxillary teeth 10 (one count), separated by a short diastema from two distinctly enlarged grooved fangs; hemipenis simple (?capitate; see Smith, 1943) with single sulcus spermaticus, distal third calyculate, median third spinose, proximal third bare; dorsal color pattern of narrow diffuse dark lines or stripes coursing the length of all but two lower scale rows; head pattern of a dark median spatulate blotch bounded laterally by narrow pale markings which unite on snout, these in turn bounded below by a dark facial stripe.

• **Diagnosis.** *Geagras* may be distinguished from other colubrid genera in theWestern Hemisphere by the following combination of characteristics: posterior maxillary teeth grooved, enlarged, separated by a diastema from the anterior maxillary teeth; rostral cuneiform, snout projecting markedly over lower jaw; loreal absent; preocular reduced, broadly separated from postnasal; postocular single; internasals and prefrontals paired, not fused to one another; five supralabials with 3rd entering orbit; temporals 1+1; dorsal scales smooth, in 15 rows throughout; anal plate divided.

• **Descriptions, Illustrations, Distribution, Fossil Record, and Pertinent Literature.** See species account.

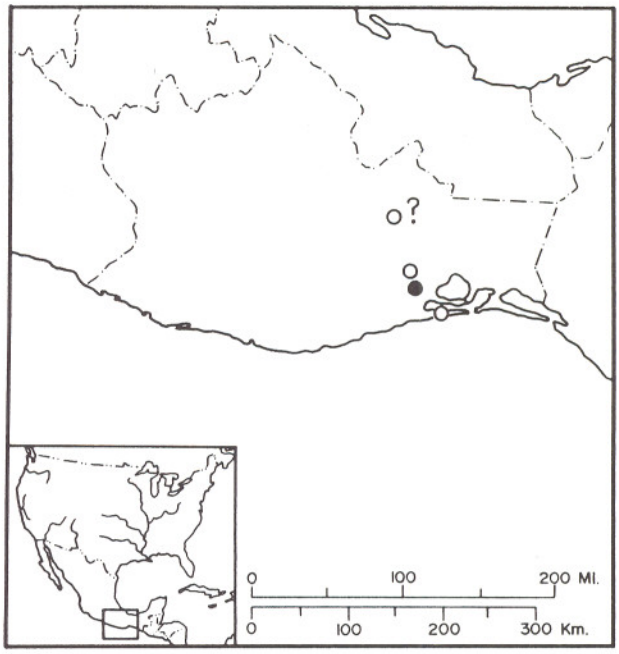
• **Remarks.** Smith (1943) noted the relationship of *Geagras* to the large genus *Tantilla*. Wilson and Meyer (1981) supported this contention and, furthermore, concluded that the relationships most closely lie with the members of the *T. calamarina* group, in particular the atypical *T. calamarina*. Wilson and Meyer (1981) noted the greater specialization of *Geagras* for fossorial life over the condition seen in *Tantilla calamarina*, itself a highly specialized member of its genus.

• **Etymology.** The name *Geagras* appears to have been formed from the Greek nouns *geo*, meaning "earth," and *agra*, meaning "booty," in apparent reference to the semifossorial habits of this attractive little snake.

Geagras redimitus Cope

Geagras redimitus Cope, 1876:141. Type-locality, "west side of the State of Tehuantepec, Mexico" (= the Pacific side of the region of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, Oaxaca, México). Holotype, National Museum of Natural History (USNM) 30115, probably a juvenile or subadult male (162 mm total length), collected by Dr. Francis Sumichrast, date of collection unknown (not examined by author).

Sphenocalamus lineolatus Fischer, 1883:5. Type-locality, "Mazatlan," Sinaloa, México (apparently in error). Holotype, Hamburg Museum 1067, sex, age, status, collector, and date of collection unknown; apparently destroyed during WW II fide H. W. Koepcke (not examined by author).



Map. Solid circle indicates the type-locality. Open circles mark other localities.

Tantilla depressa Dunn, 1928:4. Type-locality, "Mixtequilla, Oaxaca", México. Holotype, American Museum of Natural History 19747, probably an adult female (152 mm snout-vent length), collected by Paul D. R. Ruthling on 12 May 1920 (not examined by author).

• **Content.** No subspecies are recognized.

• **Definition and Diagnosis.** See generic account.

• **Descriptions.** The most complete descriptions of this taxon, although all are limited in extent, are in Cope (1876), Fisher (1883), Boulenger (1894), Hartweg and Oliver (1940), Smith (1943), and Wilson and Meyer (1981).

• **Illustrations.** The only illustrations available are those of Wilson and Meyer (1981) of the dorsal pattern (pen and ink) and the lateral and dorsal views of the head and anterior body (black-and-white photographs).

• **Distribution**. *Geagras redimitus* is found in the lowland Plains of Tehuantepec on the Pacific versant of southeastern Oaxaca, México. Records of this species from Michoacán (Duellman, 1961) are based on *Tantilla calamarina* (Wilson and Meyer, 1981). The type-locality of *Sphenocalamus lineolatus* is Mazatlán. As noted by Hardy and McDiarmid (1969), the state was not indicated. They listed *G. redimitus* as part of the Sinaloan herpetofauna, in part based on Duellman's (1961) misidentification of specimens from the supposed intermediate localities in Michoacán. An alternative possibility is that the holotype of *S. lineolatus* came from Mazatlan (= San Juan Mazatlán), Oaxaca, a village located about 76 km N of Tehuantepec and 46 km WNW of Matías Romero at an approximate elevation of 400 m, lying in the lowlands of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec.

• **Fossil Record.** None.

• **Pertinent Literature.** The literature on this taxon is almost all

of a systematic nature. References presenting descriptions are noted in the pertinent section above. Most of the literature consists of species or generic lists (Cope, 1879, 1885, 1887; Gadow, 1905; Amaral, 1929; Dunn and Dunn, 1940; Romer, 1956; Bellairs, 1969), checklists and/or keys (Cope, 1886, Smith and Taylor, 1945) or type lists (Smith and Taylor, 1950; Cochran, 1961). Wilson and Meyer (1981) discussed the relationships of this taxon to the members of the *calamarina* group of *Tantilla*. Microhabitat and/or food preferences were discussed by Sumichrast (1880) and Hartweg and Oliver (1940).

• **Etymology.** The name *redimitus* is derived from the Latin *redimitum* meaning "a wreath or crown," in apparent reference to the dorsal head markings of this species.

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